

# Labor and Public Employees Committee

## JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-353 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE  
WORKPLACE FOR CONDITIONS RELATED TO MENOPAUSE.

**Vote Date:** 3/17/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable

**PH Date:** 3/3/2026

**File No.:**

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### SPONSORS OF BILL:

Labor & Public Employees Committee

### REASONS FOR BILL:

The reason for this bill is to provide women going through menopause with appropriate and sufficient workplace accommodations, in order to better allow them to manage the symptoms that menopause brings with it. As many older women in the workplace must navigate this challenge, this bill would help to support them in the workplace.

### RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

**Tanya Hughes, Executive Director, CHRO:** Ms. Hughes is in support of the bill. He states that the bill will require employers to provide reasonable accommodations for women experiencing menopause. He claims that although CFEPa already protects employees from sex discrimination, employees would still benefit from the protections in this bill. He explains that last year Rhode Island became the first state to mandate workplace accommodations for women experiencing menopause.

### NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

**Kate Dias, President, CEA:** Ms. Dias supports the bill. She states that three of four educators in Connecticut are women, so by supporting the bill there will be positive impacts on education.

**Ed Hawthorne, President, Connecticut AFL-CIO:** Mr. Hawthorne is in support of the bill. He states that menopause is a natural stage of a woman's life, and it will have many impacts on her job performance and daily functioning. He states that the bill recognizes the

challenges of menopause and creates a framework to develop reasonable workplace accommodations.

**Yvonne Alston, MEC members, Health Disparities Institute:** Ms. Alston is in support of the bill because she believes that menopause should be considered a public health issue and a workforce sustainability issue. She states that menopause systems could make it hard for women to work and act professionally. She adds that 1.3 million women enter menopause each year in the United States, this makes up for one-quarter of the workforce. She claims that there is a Healthcare gap when it comes to treating and diagnosing menopause because many physicians feel underprepared to treat menopause. She states that 80% of women experience vasomotor symptoms such as hot flashes which could last ten years or longer. Through her experience she says that these systems are more than an inconvenience, they also affect work performance. Due to this Ms. Alston explains that 13% of women report negative career impacts, with many of them missing work, reducing their hours, or leaving the job entirely. She believes that this bill matters because it will update Connecticut workplace law to recognize menopause as a qualifying reason for workplace accommodations. She adds that the bill will require employers to notify employees of their rights and will direct the Connecticut Department of Labor to develop a model menopause accommodations policy. She explains that the accommodations in the bill, including flexibility, temperature adjustments, and breaks will allow women to fully contribute to work.

**Sana Cotten, Founder Director, Unashamed Inc:** Ms. Cotten is in support of the bill. She speaks of her experience with menopause in which she experiences hot flashes, fatigue, and trouble sleeping. She states that she can also speak to the fact black women will experience more intense menopause symptoms. She believes that workplace accommodations matter because many women quietly suffer, reduce their hours, pass on promotions, or leave the workforce entirely rather than speak out about their experiences.

**Jaya Dadwal, CEO, forEVA:** Ms. Dadwal is in support of the bill. She claims that laws are typically created with the male perspective in mind. She adds that this is true when workplace policies are created. Ms. Dadwal states that there have been two feminist reform movements. She explains that Catharine MacKinnon changed the policies surrounding sexual harassment in the workplace to consider what a 'reasonable woman' rather than a 'reasonable person' would find as harassment because men and women interpret interactions differently. She explains that maternity leave allowed more women to remain in the workforce. She believes that accommodations for menopause should be a third wave. She states that women experiencing menopause make up 20% of the US labor force, and 15% of these women will retire early because of symptoms. She claims that the lack of menopause accommodations will lead to a 'leaky pipeline effect' where gender equities will begin to pop up as a result. She states this will mostly affect organizations with women dominated leadership positions. Ms. Dadwal believes that passing this legislation will have positive impacts for men as well. She states that maternity leave led to the creation of paternity leave which improved life satisfaction and overall health for men. She adds that men are also impacted more than women when it comes to ageism in the workplace. She believes that if this bill passes it will pave the way to fixing ageism for men.

**DeLita Rose-Daniels, Program Manager:** Ms. Rose-Daniels is in support of the bill. She states that menopause is a natural occurrence that affects all women. She claims that due to a lack of awareness many women are left to suffer silently. She adds that women should not

be asked to push through menopause symptoms similarly to how a person with a temporary medical condition would not be asked to push through. She believes that supporting this sends an important message to women experiencing menopause.

**Rosemary Lopez, Women Policy Analyst, CT CWCSEO:** Ms. Lopez is in support of the bill. She explains that menopause starts anywhere between a woman's 30s and 50s, and it is accompanied by many factors including sleep disruption, night sweats, fatigue, brain fog, anxiety, depression, and joint pain. She states that a study in 2023 found that 13% of women aged 45 to 60 reported adverse work outcomes due to menopause symptoms. She adds that this has impacts on finances as well. He points out that Connecticut would not be the only state with this policy as last year Rhode Island passed similar legislation. She adds many accommodations are of little cost and menopause should not be the end of economic opportunity or career advancement of older women.

**Pitter Trisha, Private Citizen:** Ms. Trisha is in support of the bill. She states that in her mid-40s she was medically induced into menopause which caused her to experience hot flashes, anxiety, insomnia, brain fog, and difficulty concentrating. This made it difficult for her to maintain her professional responsibilities. She adds that the lack of medical guidance made her experience worse, which is something that many people experience. She explains that the lack of guidance and awareness leads many women to suffer in silence. She believes that if the bill does not pass the disparities caused by menopause will continue. Ms. Trisha believes that this bill paired with Raised Bill No. 5389 will provide more support for women navigating menopause.

**Tonishia Signore, Policy Director, She Leads Justice:** Ms. Signore is in support of the bill. She claims that the bill is built on existing language in CT's pregnancy accommodation law. She explains that menopause typically affects women between the ages of 45-55 years old and it has three stages: perimenopause, menopause, and post-menopause. She explains that while it is natural for women to experience menopause and its symptoms, it creates challenges for women in the workplace. She believes that this bill is an important step in creating equitable working conditions for women in the state. She explains that this is a low-cost policy for businesses and would help the income for women.

**Linda Sprague Martinez, Professor of Medicine, UConn Health Disparities Institute:** Ms. Martinez is in support of the bill. She states that the HDI team has been working since 2011 to solve structural inequities with medical evidence. She explains that menopause symptoms not only affect women themselves but their families as well. She states that last year HDI did a survey in which they interviewed over 500 women and their biggest ask was for workplace accommodations. She adds that the gaps in the workplace exist partially because of menopause related symptoms which cause women to retire early. She notes that these gaps exist even more for women of color because they experience symptoms more intensely. She states that Rhode Island passed similar legislation last year which called for more menopause awareness for employers, flexible workplace policies and workplace conditions. She claims that this bill will have significant economic benefits for the state because women consist of a large percent of the workforce, and this is expected to grow.

**Jade Thomas, YWCA Hartford Region:** Ms. Thomas is in support of the bill. She states that menopause typically occurs between the ages of 45 and 55 and can be accompanied by

many symptoms which can be debilitating and disrupt work. She adds that a survey found that 13% of women said that they had quit their jobs due to menopausal symptoms. She adds that research has found that there is a notable decline in earnings amongst menopausal women. She believes that this bill will benefit both employees and employers.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

None provided.

**Reported by: Olivia Buczak**

**Date: 3/26/2026**